

Message Text

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43

ORIGIN SS-30

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DRAFTED BY PM/ISO - JDSTODDART:ML

APPROVED BY PM - SEYMOUR WEISS

EUR/NE - MR. BUELL

PM/ISP - MR. BROWN

EUR/RPM - MR. ROMINE

S/S- MR. MILLER

----- 115547

P 281631Z NOV 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 234139

EXDIS

E.O- 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, UK

SUBJECT; POSSIBLE BRITISH DEFENSE CUTS

1. DURING RECENT LONDON VISIT WEISS, DIRECTOR, PM BUREAU MET WITH THOMSON, AUS, FCO, AND WAS INFORMED THAT PROPOSED MOD BUDGETARY CUTS WERE IN OFFING. SPECIFICALLY THOMSON INDICATED THAT THE CUTS WOULD EMERGE IN THE 1977 BUDGET AS BUDGET LEVELS THROUGH 1976 HAVE ALREADY BEEN FIXED. THOMSON ALSO INDICATED THAT WHILE HE COULD NOT SPEAK TO THE PRECISE MAGNITUDE OF THE REDUCTION HE HOPED IT WOULD NOT EXCEED ABOUT 10. MEMCON HAS BEEN POUCHED.

2. WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY TAKING DISCREET SOUNDING WITH THOMSON TO DETERMINE IF THE PLANNED CUTS BEGINNING IN THE 1977 DEFENSE BUDGET WILL PUBLICLY SURFACE IN THE SCHEDULED DEFENSE WHITE PAPER TO BE PUBLISHED IN FEBRUARY ON THE UK 1974/75 BUDGET ESTIMATES. WE REQUIRE CLEAR FIX ON THIS IN VIEW OF THE IMPLICATIONS TO US INTERESTS IN SEVERAL AREAS OF A PUBLIC UNVEILING BY THE BRITISH IN THEIR NEXT WHITE PAPER OF THEIR LONGER TERM INTENTIONS TO SHARPLY
SECRET

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REDUCE DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. KISSINGER

SECRET

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